

CHARIVARIA.

SAY what you may about the Welsh they have certainly mastered the art of making their political meetings merry and bright. At Mr. LLOYD GEORGE'S Carnarvon meeting, for instance, we read:—"When one woman in the gallery shouted 'Votes for Women!' her hat was torn off and hurled down on the platform." It alighted on the head of the Revd. Evan Jones, who, in a frenzy, rose from his seat, jumped on the hat, and hurled it back among the audience."

The War Office, according to *The Express*, sold the right to take cinematograph pictures of the King's recent visit to Aldershot to the highest bidder. At this rate it may yet be possible to carry on a war one day at a profit.

The HOME SECRETARY has issued an order that male convicted prisoners undergoing sentences not exceeding one month shall not be permitted to attend divine service daily, as hitherto, but only on Wednesdays and Sundays. We cannot help thinking that this may have the effect of preventing many religious persons from becoming prisoners.

An elderly person named HENRY NIXON was fined five shillings and costs last week at Canterbury for striking Sir NORMAN PRINGLE, who was interfering in a dog-fight. In canine circles this is considered a gross miscarriage of justice, and there is some talk of presenting Mr. NIXON with a collar bearing an appropriate inscription in praise of his action.

We understand that among the more thoughtful members of our leisured classes there is a feeling that there may be something in Mr. H. G. WELLS' suggestion to the effect that the use of luxurious motor vehicles may cause a certain amount of irritation in the minds of working men. As a result it is just possible that the discarded four-wheeler and the old-fashioned horse omnibus, not to mention the coster's barrow, may yet become the favourite equipages of smart society.

Rosinante seems to have figured creditably in the recent production of *Don Quichotte* at the London Opera House, but we found no allusion to *Sancho's* donkey. Surely we have plenty of artistes who could have done justice to that rôle?

"I do not believe," says Dr. HUTCHINSON, "that you can habitually overfeed a healthy, growing child." This opinion has been endorsed by a large proportion of the class referred to, and a number of public-spirited children have even expressed themselves as willing that experiments should be made on them.

It transpires from police-court proceedings at Glasgow that a professional fat lady of that city, weighing forty-seven

the master not to deny the report until we had all had time to make our little jokes on the subject.

"This pair of common storks in the gulls' aviary at the Zoological Gardens," we read, "are rearing a family of five." This confirms what we hear on all sides, namely, that it is only the common or lower classes nowadays that have large families.

"SECRETS OF VESUVIUS REVEALED. YAWNING ABYSSES."

Thus *The Daily Chronicle*. Yet we are never surprised to hear of abysses yawning, for they always have the appearance of being bored.

A gruesome story reaches us from a certain hospital. On its staff is a surgeon

who is famous for the celerity of his operations. The other day he had twelve on his list. When he had polished off the eleventh he asked where the twelfth was. "Oh, Number One refused to leave his bed," he was told. "What a pity!" said the surgeon. "That means that I have performed the wrong operations on all the others, for I took 'em in the order of the list."

An uneasy feeling, approaching panic, has been aroused among the clients of

a certain beauty doctor by a rumour to the effect that he is about to publish a book, illustrated by portraits, entitled "Masterpieces of the Restorer's Art."

Visitors to the Louvre will in future be able to hire portable stools on which they can rest in front of the great masterpieces. It is hoped that this will render it unnecessary for visitors to take the pictures home to study—as was done recently in the case of LEONARDO'S "La Gioconda."

Two girls in Budapest who had decided to fight a duel over a young man with whom they were both in love have, the well-informed *Express* tells us, settled the matter by becoming engaged to the two men who volunteered to act as their seconds. This reminds us strangely of a recent duel in France in which both the principals escaped, but one of the seconds was mortally wounded.



A BANK-HOLIDAY IDYLL.

stones, intimated that she was looking for a husband, but, upon a gentleman mounting the stage and offering to marry her, she knocked him down and threw him among the audience. The charge of assault was ultimately withdrawn, but we cannot help fearing that the lady's chances of matrimony are not so rosy as they were.

The extinction of the office boy is threatened, we are told, by the many mechanical devices for saving labour to be seen at the Business Exhibition at the Agricultural Hall. Our experience, however, goes to prove that the office boy is making a game fight to show that he can be as clever in labour-saving tricks as any of the new devices.

"M. MAURICE MAETERLINCK wishes it to be known that there is not, and never has been, any arrangement to box with GEORGES CHARPENTIER at a charity fête in June." It was nice of

TO A GENTLEMAN OF ENGLAND.

[Being thoughts, suitable for Whitsuntide, on the question whether a fair division of labour might not help to solve the present unrest.]

As when in slumber's net enmeshed,
Our limbs relaxed, our head supine,
It is our hope to rise refreshed
Just as a giant after wine,
So in the calm recess of Whit
We gather strength and moral beauty
That we may face, superbly fit,
The rather clamorous call of Duty.

You've read the wisdom day by day
Of Mr. WELLS and other seers,
Showing what England has to say
To you and all your favoured peers;
Hinting that this profound unrest
Which so disturbs our peaceful polity
Demands a sacrificial Quest
From men, like you, of knightly quality.

And now this Whitsuntide retreat
Should serve as lubricative oil
To turn you out prepared to meet
The claims of universal toil;
Not that it seemed a piece of news—
This debt you owe your poorer neighbours,
But such appeals may well infuse
A zest in your accustomed labours.

More honestly than ever yet
You will address yourself to win
The prize of smartness from the set
That Providence has placed you in;
Plying your work as one by whom
Its sanctity is understood would,
On Epsom Downs you'll tan your bloom,
At Ascot toil and spin at Goodwood.

Henley shall see the labourer's brand
On brows perspiring in a punt;
Hurlingham mark your horny hand
Tightened against the tourney's brunt;
Dinners and dances, plays and masques—
Nightly you'll be assisting at a
Fresh item of the season's tasks
Till Duty calls to Cowes Regatta.

Nor yet the round of work is done
For those of conscientious type:
The restive grouse awaits your gun,
The early cub will now be ripe;
Then comes the pheasant's claim, and still
These calls that tax your nervous tissues
Will find you straining, neck or *nil*,
To solve the nation's social issues.

Then, lest upon your active powers
Too soon the lid of languor shuts,
Cull while you can these Whitsun hours!
Go maying in among the nuts!
That none may tell it, to your shame,
How, when her trouble came upon her,
You did not play your country's game
As fits a gentleman of honour.

O. S.

From *The Making of London* :—

"The worship of Lud was a water-worship."

Which is why judges (who are proverbially sober) are addressed as My Lud.

THE OTHERS.

A LITTLE while ago "F. T. G. V. (Westmount)," a diligent and serious reader of *The Montreal Daily Star*, wrote to the editor the following letter:—

"Would you kindly publish in your columns a short biography of H. G. Wells? I am most particular to know what professions or occupations he has followed in the course of his life, and the probable effects they have had upon his writings."

The editor at once complied in the following terms:—

"Harry Gideon Wells, pathologist, was born at New Haven, Conn., in 1875. He obtained the degree of Ph.B. at Sheffield Scientific School, Yale, 1895; A.M., Lake Forest University, 1897; M.D., Rush Medical College, 1898; Ph.D., University of Chicago, 1903; interne, Cook Co. Hospital, 1898-9; studied in Berlin, 1904-5. Among his published works are "Chemical Pathology, 1907," besides numerous articles in medical and biological publications. . . . Another H. G. Wells, born in Hartford, Conn., was a dentist, and claimed to have discovered anesthesia and used it in his profession. He was also a contributor to periodical literature."

On perusing this, the British reader, accustomed to think of his "H. G." as the one and only, rubs his eyes and once again gives utterance to the pathetic inquiry, "What is a sardine?"

One can only too easily imagine further activities of the patriotic intelligence department of *The Montreal Daily Star*. Thus "A. F. (Romeville)" asks, "Will you kindly favour me with a concise biography of G. B. SHAW?" The answer is prompt:—

Gabriel Bunyan Shaw, minister of the gospel, was born at Oxville, Pa., in 1863. He was educated in his native town, but took his degree at the Boskito Divinity Seminary in 1885. Since then he has had charge of many chapels in various parts of America and is now not only pastor of the Sixty-seventh Avenue Free Congregational Church but literary editor of the *Sabbath Recreator*, a post that he has held since 1906. Mr. Shaw is the author of a number of devotional works, of which the best known are *Fanny's First Sermon* (modelled on *Jessica's First Prayer*), *The Angel's Disciple*, *The Quintessence of Moodyism*, *The Missionaries' Dilemma*, and *Mrs. Warren's Conversion*. In addition to these he has a variety of domestic volumes to his name, chief of which is the ever-popular *What to do with the Cold Beef*. There is also, of course, the famous G. B. Shaw, of Chicago, whose pork-packing factory is known all the world over; but we do not suppose that our correspondent is interested in him.

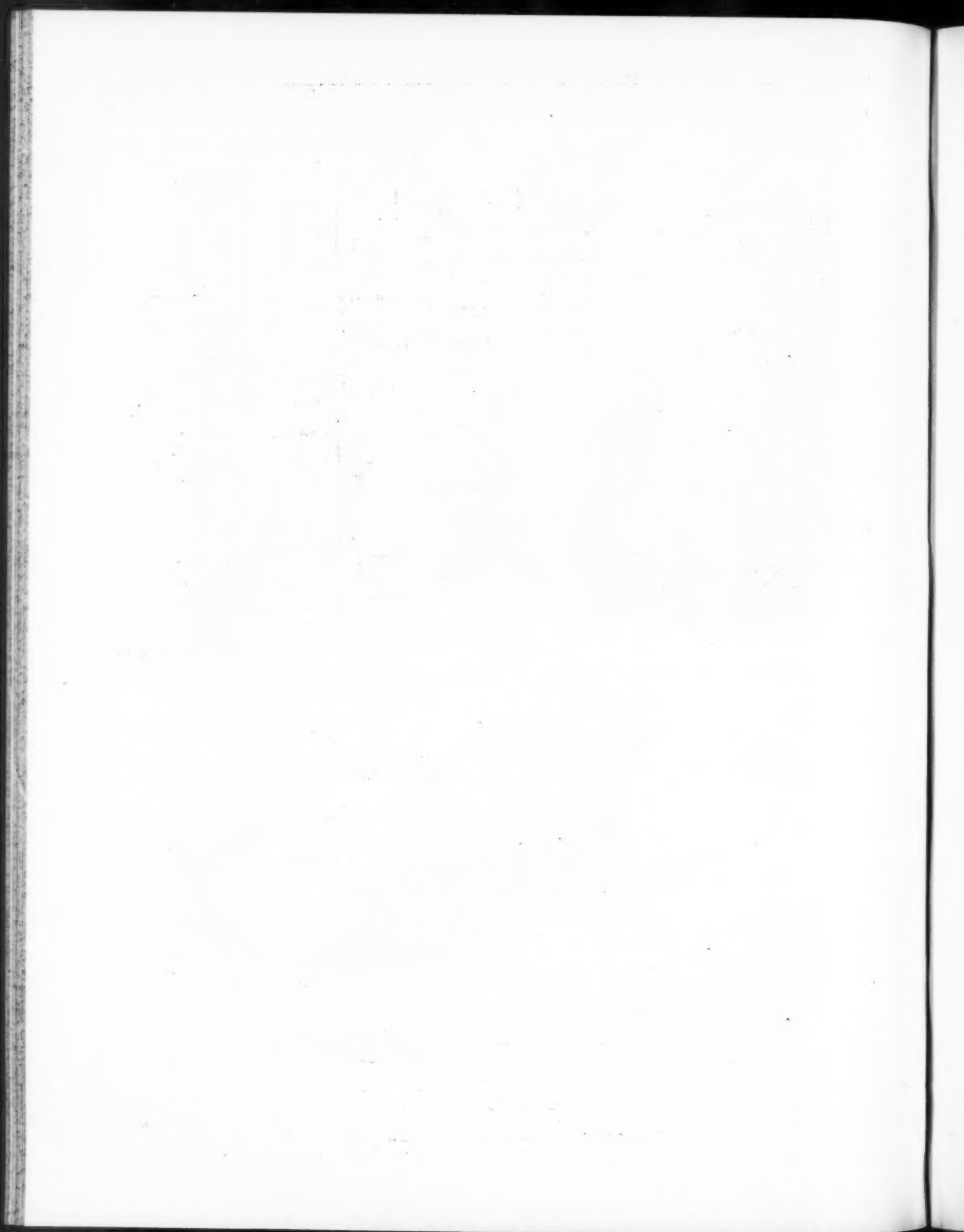
And again, "K. B. (Cheepeekie Falls)" wishes to have some particulars of the career of H. H. ASQUITH, in whose mentality she is deeply interested; and she is informed in terms such as these that Hannibal Homer Asquith, comedian, is one of the best comic men the States can boast. He was born in 1871, at Carthage (Me.), and made his *début* at the age of eleven as one of a troupe of tramp cyclists at the Freak Theatre, Poughkeepsie. Attracting the attention of the late JOSEPH JEFFERSON, he played several hundred times as the contortionist in *Rip van Winkle* before renouncing the boneless wonder business for sand-dancing and farmyard imitations. In 1905 he patented the Angel Cake-walk, and was appointed Professor of Saltatory Exegesis at the University of Tipperusaleem, Oklahoma. In 1909 he married Stanleyette Maclardy, the famous Georgian soubrette, and toured in Mexico, Yucatan and the Klondyke. His recreations are Christian Science and golf, at which his favourite club is the knobkerrie.

A modest request from "P. G. (Little Muddy Creek, Ill.)"



DOGG'D.

WINSTON. "SHIP'S BISCUIT, I THINK."





Healthy Passenger (on Isle of Man steamer). "MY DOG HAS JUST RUN UNDERNEATH YOUR CHAIR; MAY I ASK YOU TO MOVE, SIR?" Sick Passenger (faintly). "NOT IF THERE WAS A WILD ELEPHANT UNDERNEATH IT."

for a succinct memoir of GEORGE ALEXANDER elicits the following:—

Alexander, George, American merchant, was born of Macedonian stock at Thermopylae (Miss.), on July 11th, 1859. He attended a public school in that city till he was fourteen, then became a clerk in a drug store, and was a retail clothing salesman from 1881 to 1887, when he established, with Nahum Stosch, the clothing house of Alexander & Stosch, in Buffalo. Mr. Alexander, who has patented the famous "anticorrugator" trouser-stretcher, early identified himself with religious work, and has been since 1895 President of the Rational Dress Reform League.

One wonders if America has a correlative of every one on this side who is at all famous. We had long known, of course, of the two WINSTON CHURCHILLS. These later revelations are even more astounding.

VIKINGS' FARE.

ACCORDING to *The Daily Mail* the following is the recipe for M. ESCOFFIER's new masterpiece, *Fraises Sarah Bernhardt*, for whose appearance gourmets have for some time been palpitating:—

"Select some very fine ripe berries, carefully remove the stalks, and place the fruits in a silver or china timballe (bowl). Cover with powdered sugar and moisten with a few glasses of 'Curacao à la Fine Champagne,' after which keep in a cool place.

Prepare a pine-apple ice, which turn into a square 'Comtesse Marie' mould; also a very fine light mousse flavoured with the same brandy Curacao, adding a few spoonfuls of strawberry pulp passed through a very fine sieve so as to give the mousse a nice warm-appearance.

When ready to serve, turn out the ice on a deep dish, if possible square in shape. Place the strawberries all round the ice and completely cover the latter by the mousse.

To enhance the effect, place the dish whereon the strawberries repose in a block of natural ice, and cover the whole with a veil of drawn (spun) sugar."

Feeling that there is something a little decadent and effeminate about this confection as a food for the masters of the waves Mr. *Punch's* gastronomic expert has great pleasure in presenting a similar but slightly more stimulating dainty, which will be tested by a gathering of boy-scout *cognoscenti* on Hampstead Heath next Saturday. He entitles it

Fraises Francis Drake.

Prepare a large heavy mousse. To do this take two mocassins, one tomahawk, and bow and arrows. Stalk the mousse carefully until within about fifty yards, then pot it behind the left shoulder-blade. Skin body and remove the brisket (whatever that may be) and cure it over camp fire. Use it as football until thoroughly tender, mince in chaff-cutting, and mix with two pints of Devonshire cream (which should be whipped thoroughly for two hours with a stock-whip) and a quart of stone ginger-beer.

Place in a refrigerator for an hour, and if it looks cold when it comes out wrap in soft woollen comforter and sprinkle lavishly with red pepper. Now run the lawnmower lightly over the strawberry bed for ten minutes, and pour the result round mousse. Garnish with comfrey, poppadums, and angelica. Serve hard into the left-hand court with a cut, and fly for cover.

GEORGE'S WIFE'S BABY.

FROM one point of view, of course, it is George's baby. But somehow I never think of it in that light—partly, I suppose, because I have never come across George and it together, and have scarcely so much as heard him speak of it. There are times, indeed, when I am disposed to doubt if George has ever seen it.

I myself met it for the first time the other day.

"Isn't he a darling?" cried George's wife ecstatically, as she held it out for my inspection; and I could not help being at once struck by the fact that it was a singularly obese baby.

I looked at it critically and dispassionately, but thought it best not to say exactly what I felt.

"Well, can't you speak?" asked George's wife. "What do you think of him?"

"I—I was thinking that... Surely he doesn't take enough exercise?" I burst out at last, trying to put it as nicely as I could.

"What on earth do you mean?"

I saw that it was necessary to state the truth boldly and bluntly.

"Why," I said, "can't you see for yourself how stout he's getting? If I were you," I went on impressively, "I should knock off one of his meals. And don't let him sleep so much after lunch; you can't help putting on flesh if you do that."

"Putting on flesh, indeed!" cried my sister-in-law with indignation. "Why, everybody says he's the nicest little fellow that ever was—isn't 'oo, icksey-dicksey? He'd take first prize at any Baby Show—wouldn't 'oo, toodleums?"

"Is that his name?"

"Is what his name?"

"Toodleums."

"No."

"Icksey-dicksey, then?"

"No."

"Then why—" But there was a stiffened look about George's wife's shoulders as she bent over her offspring that I did not quite like. So once more I sought refuge in silence, and for a space engaged in quiet contemplation of the fleshy mass.

"Well?" asked George's wife again; and again I found I was expected to say something.

"What are you going to do with him?" I inquired with an effort.

This time there was a metallic gleam in George's wife's eyes that I liked even less than the stiffening of her shoulders.

"Is it possible," she asked, "that you are trying to work off on me a so-called joke which even the back pages of the magazines have got tired of printing? Do you want to know whether I am going to keep it or drown it? Because I may tell you at once that I've quite made up my mind to keep it."

"You misunderstand me. I merely

watch," was her next foolish remark, and she waited expectantly. I waited too. "Well, why don't you show it to him?" she said at last.

"I was waiting for him to ask me; you told him to, you know."

"Bless the man, does he think a three-months-old baby can talk? Here, give it to me."

"I—I think I must have left it at home."

"Then what's that you've got on the end of your chain?"

There was no help for it, and I had to take out the watch—a new and valuable one, given by dear Aunt

Josephine to her favourite (and most talented) nephew on my last birthday—open the case and hold it up to his ear. I got tired of this before he did, and then the trouble began, culminating in the point at which offspring and hairspring became hopelessly entangled. It may well be, as George's wife afterwards alleged, that I gave free expression to my feelings, and even if I did say "Drat the little beast!" (which I have no recollection of doing) there was surely plenty of provocation. What I do remember quite plainly, however, is that before I went I gave George's wife some sound advice concerning her baby.

"It seems to me," I said, "that he's well on the road to become a smug, self-conscious, self-indulgent little prig. He has absolutely no thought beyond himself. But what can you expect if you keep him at home all day? Let him run about with others of his own age, or, better still, send him to a

good public school. That'll knock some of the nonsense out of him, and take off some of his ridiculous fat into the bargain. You mark my words—"

But by this time I was alone in the room, and since then I have not been on the best of terms with George's wife. Nor with George either, for that matter. I happened to ask him for seven-and-six, the price of repairs to my watch, and his reply was worthy neither of a father nor of a brother.

"It's your own fault," he said coldly. "What on earth did you want to give it to him for?"

Two hours later I thought of a suitable answer; but the only person handy on whom I could have worked it off was the office-boy, and he hasn't got a baby.



THE "WHISPER GIRL" MAY BE AN EXCELLENT INSTITUTION, BUT WE ARE INCLINED TO THINK THERE MAY BE MISUNDERSTANDINGS AT FIRST.

[A whisper girl has been installed at the Globe Theatre to receive telephone calls and convey the message in a whisper to the person concerned.]

wanted to know what profession you intended him for."

"Well, whatever happens, he's certainly not going to be a horrid, spiteful journalist man who's always poking fun or slinging mud, is 'oo, icks—are you, Dicky darling?"

"Dicky darling," looking his worst, answered with a loud yell.

"There, then, did his nasty unky make him cry?"

"No, he did not," I answered shortly.

Miraculously enough, at the sound of my voice the crying stopped, and I turned a triumphant gaze on George's wife. I could see she was in two minds whether to make the baby yell again or not, but in the end her better feelings conquered.

"Ask unky to show 'oo his nice new



"DEAR ME, QUARRELLING AGAIN! YOU MUST TRY TO GIVE AND TAKE."

"THAT'S WHAT I'M TRYING TO LEARN 'IM!"

LINES TO AN AERIAL INTERRUPTER.

Good airman, sailing up and down,
If haply you should note
(Blobs on the links beneath you) Brown
And me in my green coat,
Me, by some fortune on my game,
And putting all the shots to shame
Of poor old Brown, then heed my claim
Airman, and do not act the untimely goat.

Keep far away, young flying man!
The welkin's windy trough
With those imperious pinions fan,
Shoo! little bird, be off!
When I have punched a peerless drive
Straight as the homing bee to hive,
Pinwards, or bested bogey five,
None of your foolish antics. This is golf.

Golf, and I want the caddies' praise,
And Brown's resentful "Whew!"
As the long tee-shot, winged by fays,
Transcends their struggling view;
Golf—when my mashies, soft and clean,
Do a *vol-plané* on the green,
I look for plaudits blent with teen,
I do not want them gazing up at you.

On other days—ah well! when Fate
Is niggard and unkind,
And dooms my ball to devious gait
And dunches in the rind,

And Brown (no golfer, Brown) instead
Lays the long brassie well-nigh dead
And turns to me, with triumph red,
Seeking my homage—then I do not mind.

For then I glance at Brown (quite pink,
As I observed before)
And murmur, "Brown, I sometimes think
Golf is a beastly bore;
How better far to be employed
Like that young chap, to scour the void,
Doing one's country's work or, buoyed
By dreams of bullion from *The Mail*, to soar

High from this petty vale of woe
Where we poor earthmen plod,
Threshing the landscape blow by blow,
Whilst he, like some swift god,
Holding the future in his hand,
Does battle for the wreath—how grand!—
At Hendon;—do I understand
(Caddy, my niblick!) that I play the odd?"

That is the time, young lord of air,
For you to flutter down,
Or wheel above us bold and fair
With bee-like noise, that Brown
May have the gilded nectar-cup
Dashed from his lips or e'er he sup,
But when the bard is two holes up
Oblige me, then, and do not play the clown. *EVOR.*

AN UNHAPPY SPECULATION.

THIS is how I became a West African mining magnate with a stake in the Empire.

During February I grew suddenly tired of waiting for the summer to begin. London in the summer is a pleasant place, and chiefly so because you can keep on buying evening papers to see what Kent is doing. In February life has no such excitements to offer. So I wrote to my solicitor about it.

"I want you" (I wrote) "to buy me fifty rubber shares, so that I can watch them go up and down." And I added, "Brokerage $\frac{1}{8}$ " to show that I knew what I was talking about.

He replied tersely as follows:

"Don't be a fool. If you have any money to invest I can get you a safe mortgage at five per cent. Let me know."

It's a funny thing how the minds of solicitors run upon mortgages. If they would only stop to think for a moment they would see that you couldn't possibly watch a safe mortgage go up and down. I left my solicitor alone and consulted Henry on the subject. In the intervals between golf and golf Henry dabbles in finance.

"You don't want anything gilt-edged, I gather?" he said. It's wonderful how they talk.

"I want it to go up and down," I explained patiently, and I indicated the required movement with my umbrella.

"What about a little flutter in oil?" he went on, just like a financier in a novel.

"I'll have a little flutter in raspberry jam if you like. Anything as long as I can rush every night for the last edition of the evening papers and say now and then, 'Good heavens, I'm ruined.'"

"Then you'd better try a gold-mine," said Henry bitterly, in the voice of one who has tried. "Take your choice," and he threw the paper over to me.

"I don't want a whole mine—only a vein or two. Yes, this is very interesting," I went on, as I got among the West Africans. "The scoring seems to be pretty low; I suppose it must have been a wet wicket. 'H.E. Reef, $1\frac{1}{2}$, 2'—he did a little better in the second innings. ' $\frac{1}{2}$, Boffin River, $\frac{1}{6}$, $\frac{1}{6}$ '—they followed on, you see, but they saved the innings defeat. By the way, which figure do I really keep my eye on when I want to watch them go up and down?"

"Both. One eye on each. And don't talk about Boffin River to me."

"Is it like that, Henry? I am sorry.

I suppose it's too late now to offer you a safe mortgage at five per cent.? I know a man who has some. Well, perhaps you're right."

On the next day I became a magnate. The Jaguar Mine was the one I fixed upon—for two reasons. First, the figure immediately after it was 1, which struck me as a good point from which to watch it go up and down. Secondly, I met a man at lunch who knew somebody who had actually seen the Jaguar Mine.

"He says that there's no doubt about there being lots there."

"Lots of what? Jaguars or gold?"

"Ah, he didn't say. Perhaps he meant jaguars."

Anyhow, it was an even chance, and I decided to risk it. In a week's time I was the owner of what we call in the City a "block" of Jaguars—bought from one Herbert Bellingham, who, I suppose, had been got at by his solicitor and compelled to return to something safe. I was a West African magnate.

My first two months as a magnate were a great success. With my heart in my mouth I would tear open the financial editions of the evening papers, to find one day that Jaguars had soared like a rocket to $1\frac{1}{6}$, the next that they had dropped like a stone to $1\frac{1}{2}$. There was one terrible afternoon when for some reason which will never be properly explained we sank to $\frac{1}{6}$. I think the European situation had something to do with it, though this naturally is not admitted. Lord ROTHSCHILD, I fancy, suddenly threw all his Jaguars on the market; he sold and sold and sold, and only held his hand when, in desperation, the TSAR granted the concession for his new Southend to Siberia railway. Something like that. But he never recked how the private investor would suffer; and there was I, sitting at home and sending out madly for all the papers, until my rooms were littered with copies of *The Times*, *The Financial News* and—so literally was my order taken—*Answers*, *The Feathered World* and *Home Chat*. Next day we were up to $\frac{3}{4}$, and I breathed again.

But I had other pleasures than these. Previously I had regarded the City with awe, but now I felt a glow of possession come over me whenever I approached it. Often in those first two months I used to lean against the Mansion House in a familiar sort of way; once I struck a match against the Royal Exchange. And what an impression of financial acumen I could make in a drawing-room by a careless reference to my "block of Jaguars"! Even those who misunderstood me and thought I spoke of my "flock of

jaguars" were startled. Indeed life was very good just then.

But lately things have not been going well. At the beginning of April Jaguars settled down at $1\frac{1}{6}$. Though I stood for hours at the club tape, my hair standing up on end and my eye-balls starting from their sockets, Jaguars still came through steadily at $1\frac{1}{6}$. To give them a chance of doing something, I left them alone for a whole week—with what agony you can imagine. Then I looked again; a whole week and anything might have happened. Pauper or millionaire?—No, still $1\frac{1}{6}$.

Worse was to follow. Editors actually took to leaving out Jaguars altogether. I suppose they were sick of putting $1\frac{1}{6}$ in every edition. But how ridiculous it made my idea seem of watching them go up and down! How blank life became again!

And now what I dreaded most of all has happened. I have received a "Progress Report" from the mine. It gives the "total footage" for the month, special reference being made to "cross-cutting, winzing and sinking." The amount of "tons crushed" is announced. There is serious talk of "ore" being "extracted;" indeed there has already been a most alarming "yield in fine gold." In short, it can no longer be hushed up that the property may at any moment be "placed on a dividend-paying basis."

Probably I shall be getting a safe five per cent.!

"Dash it all," as I said to my solicitor this morning, "I might just as well have bought a rotten mortgage."

A. A. M.

A Peculiar Hobby.

"The mole is a warlike animal—the most voracious, perhaps, in our island.

It is a popular belief that every true Mitford of Mitford has three moles on one part or another of his or her body."

Yorkshire Evening Post.

This fine story of British stoicism puts the tale of the Spartan boy quite into the shade.

An Adventurous Voyage.

"The liner *Virginian*, which arrived at Liverpool from Manchester on Saturday, reports having sighted seventy-seven icebergs during the voyage."—*Belfast Evening Telegraph*.

Steamers passing through the Ship Canal at this time of year ought to take the southern route.

"It must be accepted as a generally established principle that, contact having been obtained with the enemy, the Military Aviator should at once take to flight."

Air-Service Regulations.

Military Aviator: "Well, I'm tired of pushing the bally thing along. I wish I could see an enemy."

MODES FOR MOODS.

SHOWING THE DISADVANTAGES OF ADOPTING MISS VIOLET VANBRUGH'S THEORY (RECENTLY PROFOUNDED IN A CONTEMPORARY) THAT ONE'S CLOTHES SHOULD SUIT ONE'S MOOD OF THE MOMENT.



Extract from Diary.—AFTER LUNCH, WENT OUT WITH BILL. FELT ROTTEN. BILL HORRIBLY CHEERFUL.



BOUGHT A NEW HAT. FELT BETTER. BILL UNFORTUNATELY OVERHEARD PRICE. BOTH HAD TO GO HOME AND CHANGE BEFORE GOING TO PARK.



BILL WENT ON TO HIS CLUB AND HAD A SUCCESSFUL GAME OF SNOOKER. I WENT TO MINE AND PLAYED BRIDGE. HELD ROTTEN CARDS ALL THE TIME. BILL INSISTED ON DINING OUT.



PERKED UP AFTER DINNER. THE CHAMPAGNE OR SOMETHING DISAGREED WITH BILL, SO WE BOTH HAD TO RETURN HOME AND CHANGE AGAIN BEFORE GOING TO THE DUMPSHIRE'S.



Otherwise Respectable Person. "IF I HOLD ON I LOSE MA TRAIN! IF I LET GO I FA' DOON! WAS EVER MORTAL MAN IN SIC A PREDEECAMENT!"

THEATRICAL NOTES.

THE recent action of Mr. ARTHUR BOURCHIER in changing the title of his Garrick Theatre success to *Proper Peter*, in order to meet the views of "many parents," is one that was sure to give rise to considerable comment in dramatic circles. Other managements will certainly not be slow to follow his excellent example.

Thus we learn, on wholly impeachable authority, that Messrs. VEDRENNE and EADIE are about to rename their programme at the Criterion; and that *The Kiss* and *The New Sin* are to be called respectively *The Handclasp* and *His Father's Will*.

Mr. MACDONALD HASTINGS' other work is also to be brought into line with the new movement by having its title changed immediately from *Love—*

and What Then to the more innocent one of *Affection—et Cetera*.

On the other hand, Mr. ARTHUR COLLINS wishes us to contradict a rumour that the name of the spectacular drama at the National Theatre is to be changed from *Ben Hur* to *Ben Him*. Sir GEORGE ALEXANDER also denies in the most emphatic manner that he has any intention of playing *Bella Donna* under the suggested new title of *Ammoniated Quinine*.

At the Apollo Theatre, every evening, *The Pleasant Smile*.

Other recent innovations by two West-end managements, of which one provides a "Whisper Girl" to convey telephone calls to members of the audience during the performance, the other adds a short story by a popular author to its programme, have not passed unnoticed. It is very generally

felt that these actions mark a tendency which, if carried far enough, may entirely remove the fault so often found with the theatre as a place where there is "nothing to do but watch plays."

Happily the palatial building shortly to be erected by the enterprise of Mr. CHARLES FROHMAN will do much towards this end, as we hear that, in addition to spacious reading and writing rooms, London's newest theatre is to be provided with a swimming-bath, a gymnasium, and a circulating library. It is said, moreover, that an ingenious system of sound-proof shelters, attached to the higher-priced seats, will enable their occupants to enjoy complete immunity from the often disturbing traffic of the stage.

THE MYTH.

(A Thames Trout.)

WHERE the bulrushes grow ranker
(Oh, the long green spears a-gleam!)
There the punt shall rock at anchor
In the stream;

By the weir's cool curve of thunder,
By the stones where wagtails plunder
Foolish daddy-long-leg flies,
And the strings of rainbow bubbles in
a rhapsody arise!

Hours may pass and hours go fleeting,
You shall heed them not, but stay
Lost to them, and all the sweetening
Of the may;

For beneath the swelling current
Where the midge-cloud hangs susurrant,
And the sweeping swallows go,
Lives a most prodigious monster, lurking
learnedly and low!

No! I've never really seen him,
But the boatman tells a tale
Of a something ("must 'a' been 'im")
Like a whale

On the shelving shallow showing,
"Where them kingcups is a-growing,"

Only just the other night,
And the frightened fry went leaping
from the Presence left and right!

But a crafty old curmudgeon
He must be, for ne'er a fin
Does he move for any gudgeon
That you spin;

With a wink he maybe watches
'Neath the willow-root's dark notches
As you toil with aching wrist,
But the landing-net's no nearer, nor
the deft taxidermist!

But the skies are smiling bluely,
There is shade along the shore,
And the chestnut's litten newly

Lamps a score;
Drop the rod then and be thankful
For the sights that fill the bank full—
Verdant meads and ancient stems
And the broad paternal bigness and the
peace of Father Thames!

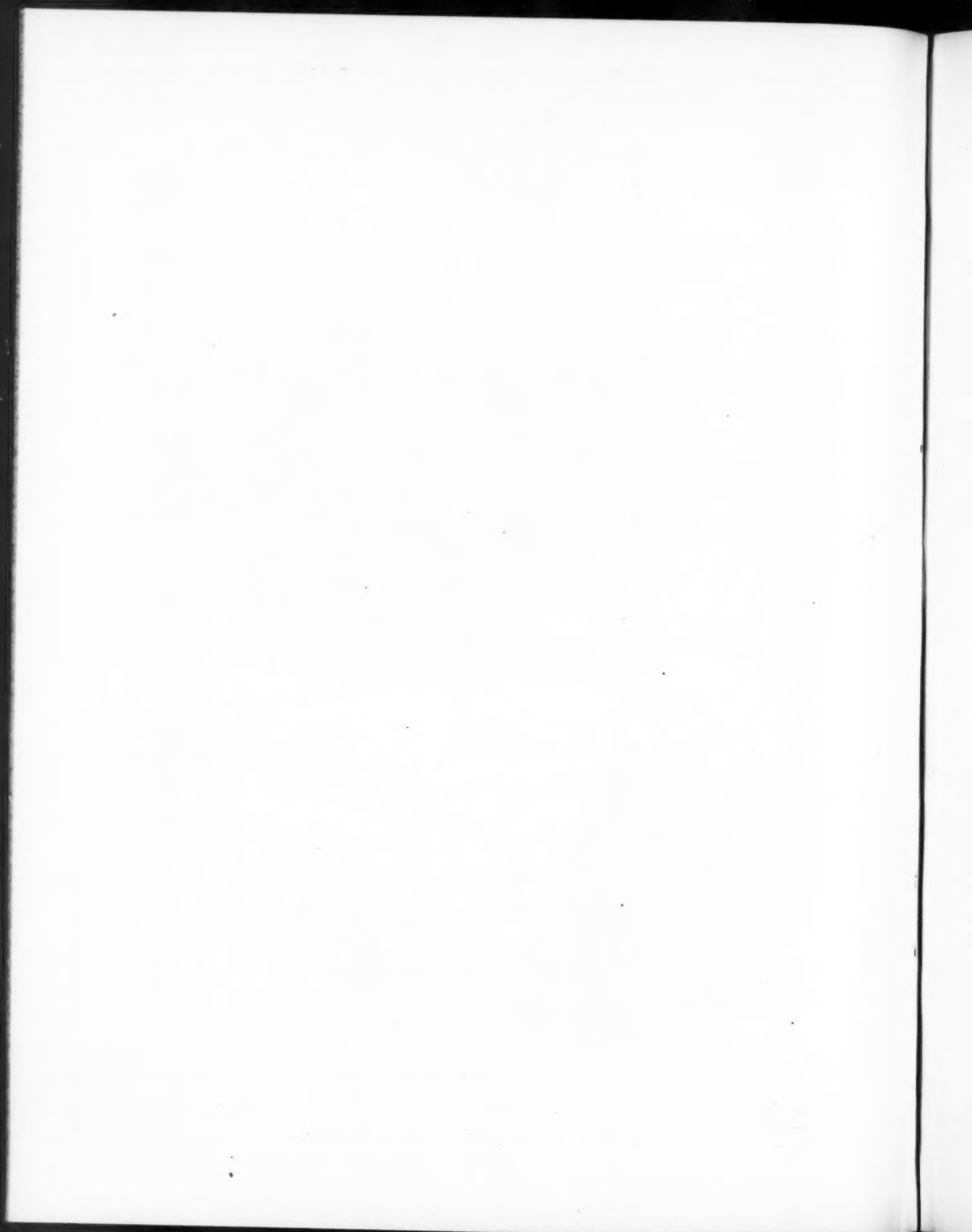


ON THE CRATER'S EDGE.

JOHN BULL (*to Committee of Enquiry*). "HALLO, DOWN THERE! ANYBODY DISCOVERED ANYTHING?"

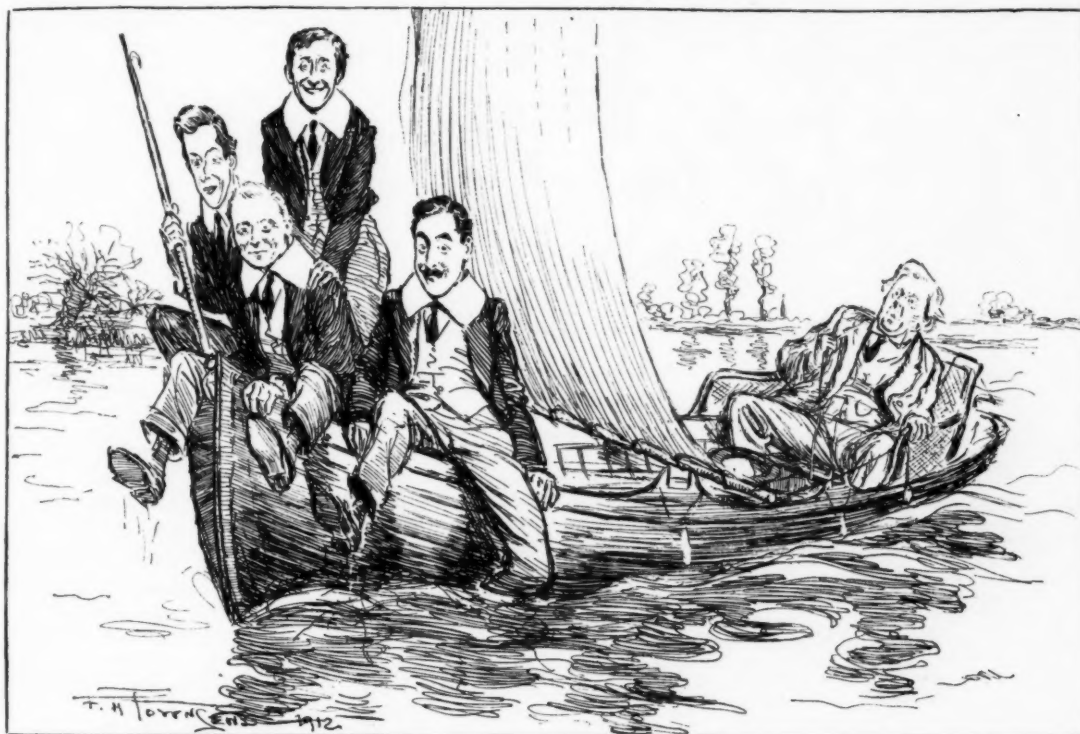
VOICE (*from below*). "NOT YET, BUT WE'RE GETTING WARM."

[An Italian savant has recently been prosecuting investigations in the hollow of Vesuvius.]



ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.



"YOUTH AT THE PROW AND (MIXED) PLEASURE AT THE HELM."

MR. F. D. ACLAND. MR. WEDGWOOD BENN.
SIR JOHN SIMON. MR. HERBERT SAMUEL.

MR. ASQUITH.

House of Commons, Monday, May 20. —Curious how history repeats itself in the record of Parliament. Time was within memory of a few still seated on the green benches when the House of Commons possessed two BENs. One was the Right Honourable GEORGE BENTINCK, Member for West Norfolk, who proudly wrote himself down in *Dod* "A Tory," an ancient honourable style, which in his later days became effaced by intrusion of the modern name Conservative. The other was CAVENDISH BENTINCK, Member for Whitehaven, a legislator with tousled hair which when, in accordance with frequent habit, he stood at the Bar surveying the House, suggested that he had just been drawn through a hedge backwards. One, by reason of his ample proportions, was known as BIG BEN. The other, moulded on smaller scale, was LITTLE BEN.

To-day we have with us only one BENN, upon whom his godfathers and godmother in his baptism, with prophetic foresight of what in due time would become a precious antique ware,

bestowed the name of WEDGWOOD. The twentieth-century LITTLE BENN ranks in Ministry as Junior Lord of Treasury, his place being in the Whips' room or the Lobby. PREMIER's quick eye discerning his capacity, he has this session found provided for him a seat on Treasury Bench, where he represents FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS, throned in the Lords.

The preference fully justified. The DEPUTY FIRST COMMISSIONER's answers are excellent alike in matter and manner. To-day delighted House by unexpected turn of ingenuousness. Long question on paper affecting status of architects engaged by Board of Works. Reply duly read. Up gat inevitable Supplementary Questioner with endeavour to confound the young Minister by reference to state of things existing in 1869.

"I am afraid," said LITTLE BENN, irresistible boyish smile illuminating his countenance, "my memory does not go back so far."

The House, remembering that he is in his thirty-fifth year and looks nine-

teen, burst into roar of sympathetic laughter, under which the Supplementary Questioner, for once abashed, sat silent.

The incident focusses attention upon prominent, noteworthy characteristic of present Government. SARK, whose memory, going further back than LITTLE BENN's, recalls the *personnel* of the DISRAELI Government, declares that, compared with long succession of Ministries subsequent thereto, the average of age in the present one is by many points the lowest. The barge of State is manned by Youth at the prow and (mixed) Pleasure at the helm in the person of ASQUITH, himself youthful compared with PALMERSTON, DISRAELI and GLADSTONE when they were seated in his place.

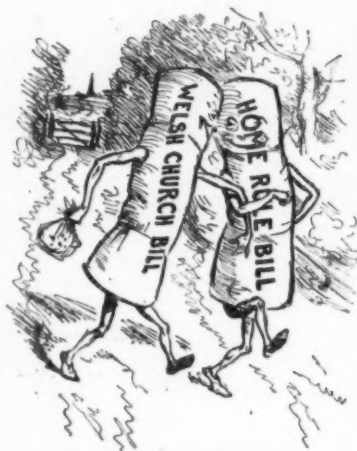
In one respect Nature has done something to rob FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY and HOME SECRETARY of the attribute of youthfulness theirs by right of years. As in some Alpine regions, volcanic forces at work leave particular mountains bald-pated among a group of snow-clad hills, so these

twin Ministers would find convenient headgear in the halo PRINCE ARTHUR has already fixed on the head of ST. McKENNA. At the time when GEORGE WYNDHAM, *Silas Wegg* of the Front Opposition Bench, dropped into poetry, voicing the aspiration of the patriotic Party in the immortal couplet

We want eight
And we won't wait,

it was proudly said of McKENNA, then at the Admiralty, that he never turned a hair. WINSTON is still capable of performing that acrobatic feat. But the intense heat of brain force beneath the cranium is rapidly withering away the heather.

For the rest the young men of the Ministry suffer no detriment from natural youthfulness of appearance.



OFF FOR THE HOLIDAYS.

"What a lark if we never went back."

Their age is an accident; their Parliamentary capacity, individual and in the aggregate, is a marvel. As far as memory or reading goes, never has a Leader of the House of Commons been served by so strong a team of youngsters as that which ASQUITH with light skilful hand drives to-day.

Business done.—In Committee on Civil Service Estimates. The INFANT SAMUEL makes annual statement of work at Post Office. He demonstrates afresh that the young fellows alluded to are not only high-grade debaters but exceptionally able administrators.

Wednesday.—Attendance, dangerously diminishing through last two days, remitted by adjournment for Whitsun recess. Bringing up the rear of group of Members joyously going off for holiday, walked arm-in-arm the Home Rule Bill and his companion dealing with the Welsh Church. Both have passed Second Reading stage and stand for Committee when business is resumed.

"Supposing we never went back!" chuckled Home Rule Bill.

"What a lark!" responded his merry rival.

Business done.—Adjourned till 4th June.

THE ROMANCE OF PETER GRAHAM'S WHISKERS.

PREFACE.

No blame attaches to Mr. FRANK RICHARDSON in this regrettable affair.

CHAPTER I.

THE BEGINNING.

Peter Graham was in all but his substantial form (which was short, stout and ruddy) a self-made man. He was very happy of disposition and determined of character, as firmly resolved to do everything well for his own part as he was convinced that all things were for the best as arranged by Providence. Only when he was made a Justice of the Peace for his county did he begin to entertain doubts, and those not of himself but of Providence. He never questioned that he was capable of fulfilling the magisterial office as it had never been fulfilled before, but he could not help feeling that appearances were against him. The genuine judicial face is not round, bonny and jovial; it is long, solemn and knowing. He improved his law, he improved his clothes, and with enormous effort he improved his figure. But his face he could not alter, for if that is not of the magisterial cut nothing will make it so, except (he thought in a moment of inspiration) short, sharp and precise side whiskers.

It so fell out that about that period Mr. Justice Phipps (let us call him) very conveniently went the North-Eastern Circuit and visited the assize town of Peter's county. By so doing he afforded him a model of the lines which the administration of criminal justice and the development of the legal whisker should follow. Seeing him, Peter at once made up his mind and the appropriate growth was begun.

CHAPTER II.

THE END.

The success of the new appendages, as reflected by his mirror, seemed to Peter Graham to be complete. He only needed an opportunity to test their effect on an expert or two before he made his first public appearance on the Bench. That opportunity was afforded by an invitation to dine and sleep at the Chairman's country house on the eve of the Quarter Sessions. Peter, full of confidence in his facial dignity, packed his bag and set forth to make his debut.

From the station to the Chairman's house was a mile drive, and he drove it in the village fly. Cabmen are not experts, but this one, he felt no doubt, was in the habit of conveying J.P.'s and would have an eye for such. Peter was only too aware of the man's close scrutiny and noted with satisfaction the decision with which he mounted his box-seat and started his horse, as one who knew what he was about. His attitude seemed to suggest that he had noted the whiskers and drawn a deduction from them. This was the fact. Peter could have wished that the man had uttered a "M'lud," but had no hesitation in believing that his thoughts lay in that direction. This was not the fact.

As the fly drew near the lodge gates the man leant over from his box and, in a tone so far removed from respect for a tribunal as to be contempt for an equal,

"Stable entrance, I s'pose?" he said.

TO EDWARD, A PUPPY.

(On the day that I lost him.)

My Edward, since early this morning,
When I pondered a poem (to Jane),
And you slipped from my side without warning,

The house has been plunged into pain;

Your absence has blighted our pleasure,
Expunged are the smiles that were ours

By the thought of your burying osseous treasure

Midst alien flowers.

We are lonely to-night, we are lone, Ted;
Come back; let your wanderings cease.

In the home there's an air of unwonted
And far from enjoyable peace.

Unrucked by your juvenile scrambles,

Serene in its place is each mat,
While out in the garden, unchivied,
there gambols

The Tomkinsons' cat.

Forgiven are all your vagaries;

Come home to us, all shall be right.

We are sitting and sighing, "O where is

Our wandering puppy to-night?"

Deprived of your presence we languish,

Bereft of your bark we are sad;

Come home and redeem your adorers

from anguish,

Young fellow-me-lad.

"A beautiful colour flooded her face; a soft light—half proud, half tearful—shone in her left hand, closely pressed against her heart."

Church Family Newspaper.

The danger of carrying a tearful light in the left hand is that one is so likely to leave it behind in a cab.



MR. AND MRS. HAWKINS ENTERTAINED A FEW FRIENDS TO A DAY'S SPORT ON WHIT-MONDAY AMONG THE BOOTHS, COCOA-NUT SHIES, RINGS, DARTS, ETC., AT EPPING. LUNCHEON, AT WHICH THE LADIES OF THE PARTY JOINED THE SPORTSMEN, WAS SERVED IN THE FOREST, AND A PHOTOGRAPH WAS TAKEN WITH THE DAY'S BAG LAID OUT ON THE SWARD.

A NUDE DEPARTURE.

[“Having a grievance against the council, two hundred bathers, it is stated, threatened to march in a semi-nude condition through the streets of Southend, by way of protest.”

Evening News.]

By to-night it is estimated that 10,000 bathers throughout the country will be on strike. An important meeting of the Executive of the Amalgamated Society of Serpentine Swimmers is taking place, and there is a possibility that the trouble will assume a serious aspect. If some agreement is not come to during the week it is quite likely that the Channel-Swimming season will be entirely ruined. Southend to-day was a scene of wild excitement. The whole town seemed to be out. So was the tide. All of a sudden a cry was raised that there was a non-union man attempting to bathe, and an angry mob of “semi-nudes” rushed to the spot. Shouts of “Black-leg!” were raised as the unhappy man was hauled from the mud, and the remark of a

bystander that “black legs would be nearer the truth” was not without point. He was ultimately rescued by the police. A mass meeting of the National Bathers' Federation is to be held in Hyde Park next Sunday. The more hot-headed section lost their resolution that everyone should go in a semi-nude condition, and University costume will be worn. There will be a variety of speakers from divers platforms. The principal orator will be Mr. Mackintosh, about whom the quarrel with the Southend Town Council first started. The whole family of Mackintosh is exceedingly popular with the Southend bathers, and the high-handed action of the Council in refusing to let them walk through the streets to the sea (if any) in bathing costume is deeply resented. There is also the vexed question of Mixed Bathing, and it is understood that so serious a view do the Government take of the situation that Mr. ASQUITH contemplates introducing a Minimum Age Bill

at an early date. Meanwhile the Board of Trade is (as usual) keeping a watchful eye on the situation, and we are to have Mr. CHURCHILL's assurance, made after consultation with the HOME SECRETARY, that “the Admiralty is fully alive to the necessity of protecting the bathing-machines of the coast towns in case of a riot, but that at present the ‘semi-nudes’ are behaving in a most orderly manner, and he does not anticipate that the services of the Navy will be required.”

“The English yield of hay from permanent grass was 38.3 cwt., but in Ireland it was almost precisely double—50.5 cwt.

Yorkshire Post.

If all our contemporary's “doubles” are like this its Sporting Commissioner must be an unpopular man.

“Well-Educated Young Swiss Lady, highly recommended, leaving present situation on account of French, and Music lessons to children.”

Add. in “The Standard.”

Enough to make anyone want to move on.

LINES ON A DEAD BICYCLE.

ALTHOUGH I be a thing of waggish cheer
 And philosophical habit, little prone
 To make much noise, or drop the kindly tear
 On anyone's affairs except my own,
 Yet, were I soulless as a gramophone,
 Ah me, ah me,
 Still would I weep, this piteous sight to see.
 For, mark you, this poor stricken thing has been
 The petted darling of some dainty fair;
 Hers was the hand that loved to keep it clean,
 Watched it and tended it, and with fond care
 Gave it sweet oils, and swiftly would repair
 Its slightest hurt
 From piercing nail, perchance, or caking dirt.
 And 'twas a lovely creature. Of a truth,
 Nature has nothing fairer to the sight
 Than a young bicycle in its fresh youth,
 So strong it is and slender, slight and light,
 A thing of perfect symmetry, whose bright
 And brilliant parts
 Disarm the sternest and entrance all hearts.
 And O what joy, when, with a favouring gale,
 Lightly they skimmed the land, these happy twain;
 Up hill, down dale, especially down dale,
 Although quite decent hills they would attain,
 Unless the lady, finding it a strain,
 Began to puff,
 And got off, feeling that she'd had enough.
 A gallant time, but all too quickly changed
 And sadly. It was ever woman's whim
 To leave the thing she loves and grow estranged.
 Perhaps she found the early gloss grow dim,
 Or, haply, yearned toward some newer "jim"
 Which this poor steed
 Lacked, and till then had never known the need.
 All this we know not. Only we expect
 The lady grew indifferent, ceased to tend
 Her charge, for with indifference comes neglect,
 The care became a nuisance, and the friend
 An ever-growing bore; and, in the end,
 The lady got
 Rid of it somehow—how, it matters not.
 Small need to trace its fall; how it became
 Cheaper and ever cheaper, as it passed
 From hand to hand; we see the once sleek frame
 Ungroomed, while lower in the social caste
 Ever it fell, until we find at last
 The pampered pet
 A hireling bob's-worth for some 'Arriet.
 And now 'tis dead. Its end was swift and kind,
 More kind than life. With wild and frenzied leap
 A mad bus sprang upon it from behind
 And knocked it endways to its last long sleep.
 And now about a crushed and mangled heap
 The hushed crowds throng
 While sad policemen bid them pass along.
 Pass to thy rest, poor bike! Thy task is done.
 Alone thou aged'st and alone hast died.
 Thy rider saw the peril—wretched one!—
 Thought not of saving thee, but to one side
 Leapt with a squeal whereat calm taxis shied.
 She's in a swoon
 Just now, but she'll be sorry for it soon.

DUM-DUM.

THE LIGAMENT.

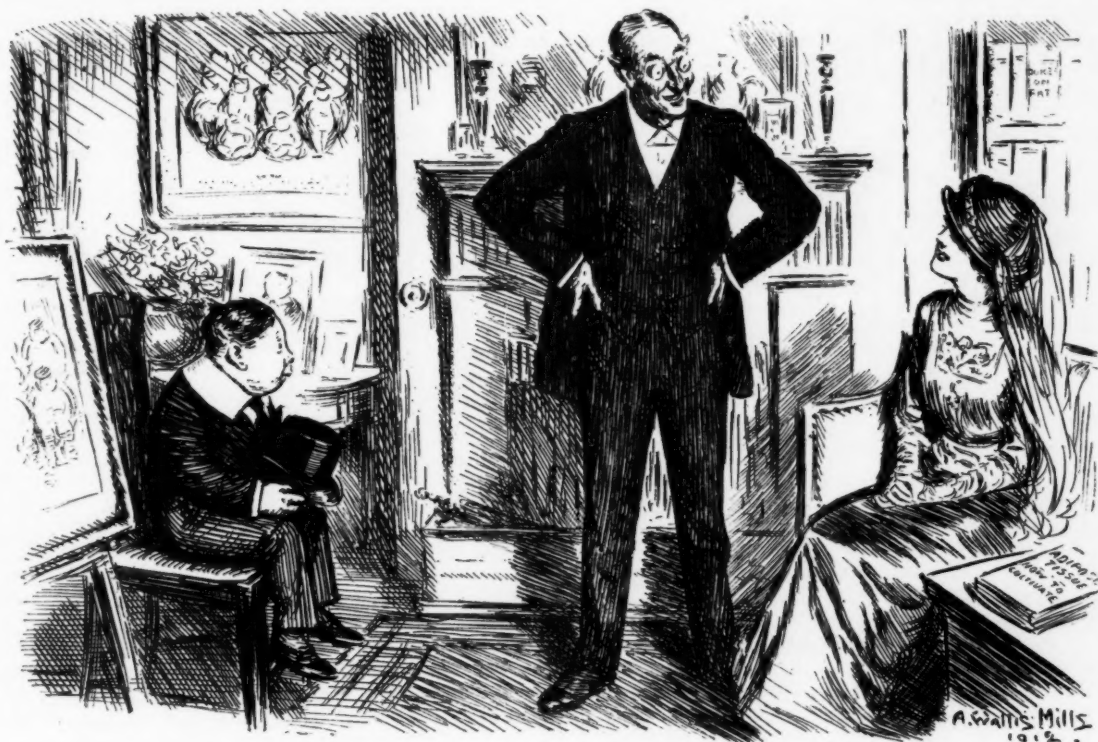
(By One who helped to tear it.)

WE got the lawn tennis net up last week—at least the gardeners did—and it looked lovely with the court beautifully marked out and all shining in the sun. Then Rosie and I went to Dad. He was writing in his room, but we told him he'd ordered the net to be fixed and given us rackets, so he simply must come and play with us and really teach us how to do it. It's no good playing that sort of game by yourselves, because you forget all the rules, and then you begin to argue, and then somebody throws down her racket and says it's not fair and she won't play any more. Grown-ups make all the difference.

Well, first of all, Dad said he was much too busy and couldn't possibly come, and then he looked out of the window and said it wasn't such a bad day after all, and then he jumped up and said he could only be young once, and where was his racket? Then he said we must all look slippery into our tennis-shoes. He took an awfully long time getting his on, because he couldn't find them at first, and when he did find them they were the wrong ones. He said it was always so with his boots and shoes: the right ones always hid themselves and the wrong ones tried to get themselves put on. But at last he was ready, and out we went and found Peggy waiting for us outside. She said Mum couldn't come and had told her to go out and make a fourth, and there she was. We didn't really think she was up to it, because she's so small and has to hold her racket in both hands, which doesn't look well; but she'd made up her mind she was going to play, and Dad always indulges her very much because she makes him laugh.

We began by having lessons, which was a useful thing, but not very exciting. We learnt what all the white lines meant and how to count, and what it means when someone says you've got a hole in your racket, and all about deuce and vantage-in and vantage-out, and at last Dad said we'd all got our railroad service quite perfect and it was time to have a real game. He was enjoying himself tremendously, pretending that his name was GOBERT and asking us to model ourselves carefully on him. I believe GOBERT is a Frenchman who plays tennis rather well.

Dad chose Rosie as a partner and I had Peggy, and then we began. I served. I'm not sure Dad was doing his very best, because he didn't put many balls to Peggy, and when he did they were very gentle balls, and Peggy managed to get one or two over. Anyhow, we won the first game, and Dad and Rosie won the second, and then we began the third. It was Peggy's service, and, because she was so small, she was allowed to serve standing close up to the net. She kept dancing about and chattering all the time while Dad was imploring her to treat tennis seriously and to remember what the world owed to tennis. So we got to thirty all, and Dad said it must be put an end to, and, if Rosie bucked up and helped him, they would now run out and win the game in double-quick time. So, when Peggy served to him next, he gave her what he called a teaser for a return. It was up in the air and it came down with a big flop and bounced up again ever so high. Peggy never saw it. She shut her eyes and just swung herself at it with her racket in both hands as if she were taking what Dad calls a swipe to leg. She hit it all right, and away it went skimming over the net into Rosie's court near the back line. Rosie was laughing so much she had tumbled down all of a heap and couldn't get up in time, so Dad made a rush, shouting out, "Leave it to me," and Rosie rolled herself away out of the court, and Dad got to the ball, and I thought he was going to do it. But just as he was taking a whang at the ball he stopped short and yelled out, "Ow!



[THE HEADMASTER OF RUGBY IS REPORTED TO HAVE SAID AT THE RECENT CONFERENCE ON SCHOOL DIET THAT "WHILE ADULTS SHOULD RISE FROM THE TABLE HUNGRY, CHILDREN SHOULD REACH A SENSE OF REPLETION BEFORE RISING."]

House Master (with pride to Parent). "THEN WITH REGARD TO FOOD: WE FEED OUR BOYS TO REPLETION FIVE TIMES A DAY AND OUR CHEF'S PUDDINGS HAVE NO EQUAL IN ANY SCHOOL IN THE KINGDOM."

who hit me?" "Nobody hit you," I said. "That's forty-three."

"Yes," he said, "Rosie chucked a stone at me and hit me on the calf of the right leg."

We were all laughing, because Dad looked so funny hopping about with one leg in the air; but Rosie made her face serious and told him she hadn't thrown a stone at him. Then Dad put his foot down and took a step, but it wasn't much of a step, and he said, "Ow, ow! I can't walk properly. I wonder what it is."

At this moment Uncle Edward came on to the lawn—he isn't really our uncle, but we call him that—and Dad told him what had happened. Uncle Edward said, "I know what you've done. I'll bet a hundred you've torn a ligament. A man of your age ought to be more careful. My father did the same thing last year and was laid up for six weeks."

This seemed to make Dad angry. He said, "Don't talk rot about a man of my age not playing a footling game of lawn-tennis."

"Well, you mustn't play any more footling games of lawn-tennis," said Uncle Edward; "you must confine yourself to the grand old athletic games of marbles and spillikins."

Then he helped Dad to hobble into the house.

Dad hadn't torn it badly, because he can get about with a stick. But he says it's a dreadful thing for him to be struck down in a mere frontier skirmish after having survived so many pitched battles.

A COCKNEY DÉPAYSÉE.

I'M sick of the bulging self-satisfied trees,
The hedges all whitewashed with May,
I can't get away from the redolent breeze,
I smell nothing else night and day.
I'm weary to death of the willow-wren's song,
Of the glint of the gorse on the down,
And, confined by a turquoise horizon, I long
For the smoke and the swelter of Town.

It's O for the shops when the season is young,
Not these stupid plantations of fir;
It's O for the clip of a cockneyfied tongue,
Instead of this slovenly burr;
It's O for the glamour, the grit and the grime,
The wealth and the wheels and the whirl,
And it's O for the bliss of a glorious time—
The kind that appeals to a girl.

With zephyrs unsullied my senses are cloyed
In this box-bordered prison of bloom,
But the reek of the Tube I'd inhale overjoyed
Or a motor-bus spurting its spume.
Wistaria tassels encircle the pane,
With gold the genista is scored;
This happens each year, now it's happened
again,
And I think I've a right to be bored.

THE WATCHMAN.

You know the type of premises that are positively coming down on Tuesday next, and are consequently giving their stock away?

Two months ago I was so rash as to stop and look at one:—

WRIST-WATCHES
FROM 7/6.

attracted me.

I am a careful man, so I did nothing about it at the moment; but next Wednesday I happened to be passing the shop again.

This time I was attracted right inside.

"I want a wrist-watch from seven-and-six," I said.

The man began to show me some at thirty shillings.

"No," I said firmly. "Here is seven-and-sixpence; now show me a wrist-watch from it."

He looked hurt, but he produced a neat little new season's watching in art gun-metal.

"Does it go at all?" I asked.

This time he looked so hurt that I hastened to reassure him.

"There, there," I said, "I'm sure it goes like a—like a clock."

"Yes, Sir," he said; "very like a clock."

The clock it went like must have been the one Aunt Sophie gave us three years ago. It lost half-an-hour daily for a week, and then simply dropped out.

I took the watch back to the premises, which had managed to stay up somehow.

I thought the man was going to cry.

"We don't get complaints, not twice a year, Sir! But we'll let you have another instead," he said finally.

The second was, I always think, the best of them. It lost three-quarters of an hour a day, but it went for three whole weeks.

When I took it back, the premises were as up as ever, though there was another man in attendance. He explained to me confidentially that they didn't get complaints twice a year, but that they would let me have another instead.

The one they let me have instead didn't look strong from the first; it hardly went at all, except now and then at night, when no one was looking.

Finally, I packed it up and returned it with a note, intimating that I was sorry to break their complaint record. I also put it to them that I didn't want another instead; that wrist-watches had lost their appeal for me; but that

I was prepared to consider seven-and-sixpences.

Then came the master-stroke.

The watch-man replied. He apologised for the trouble my exceptional bad luck had occasioned me; he deprecated strongly, however, any idea of giving it up as a bad job; and he enclosed a silver wrist-watch as a compensation for previous inadequacies.

I kept it. I have it now. It is true that as a watch it has its failings. One of these is a tendency to go backwards. In this and in some other respects it falls short of being an altogether reliable time-piece; but it is silver. There must be nearly a shilling's-worth of silver in it; and I had got it in exchange for a paltry piece of gun-metal work.

Yesterday I passed the shop again. It flaunted a compelling show-card in blue and red:—

SPECIAL LINE.
BANKRUPT STOCK.
35% UNDER COST.
REAL SILVER WRIST-WATCHES.
FROM 6/6.

Next Tuesday I'm going round to help the premises with a pick-axe.

MORE "LETTERS TO MYSELF."

UNDER the title *Letters to Myself* a book has just been published. I have not seen it, but the idea is so attractive that it has set me upon a similar form of composition. Telegrams to myself I have more than once despatched, when a house was too boring to stay longer in; but letters from the same hand to that destination are a novelty. Here then are a few which I have just received, with their answers:—

I.

DEAR OLD SPORT,—Don't you think it is about time to give up betting? Once, in the dim and distant days, when the little wanton gees were less wanton, there was something in it. In that blessed period, now apparently for ever gone, a favourite sometimes behaved as such and came in first: Mr. RUFF was more or less a sound guide: form told. But now? What happens now? Not a single favourite has won a big race this year. It is enough to make a horse the favourite to knock all the spirit out of him. It is like giving a dog a bad name. Look at the Chester Cup; look at the Jubilee Stakes; look at the Stewards' Cup; but most of all look at the Derby. There never was such an open Derby as this in the

history of the Turf. A month ago there were two favourites at 3 or 4 to 1. Where are they now? One is not in the betting at all; the other is between 10 or 20 to 1, both having descended from their proud positions to be among the "also rans." In such a time of flux and defiance of sound principle, give your bookie a miss, dear boy. Be wise in time.

Your sincere Admirer,

YOURSELF.

THE ANSWER.

DEAR OLD PAL,—I like you, and I believe in what you say; but what is life without a flutter? So I shall continue to lose your money—my money—our money—in the hope of one day making a real parcel.

Your wilful ONE OF US.

II.

MEIN LIEBER FREUND (Oh, but I forgot, you don't know German), you really must take a little more care of your health. I watched you the other night on your way home from that City dinner—you could easily have seen me—and I was ashamed. You not only swayed but you sang; and the result of watching you was that I contracted a terrible headache. Think of the future, if only for my sake.

Your Well-wisher, ME.

THE ANSWER.

DEAR MORALIST,—So that was you I saw. There seemed to be two of everybody, and now I understand the whole thing. The other is the fellow who writes the letters. Well, I promise to obey as long as I can, and no one but a fool undertakes to do more than that. By the way, I wonder if your headache was as bad as mine. Mine was awful.

Your repentant DOUBLE.

III.

DEAR SELF,—Hadh't this habit of corresponding better cease? It is becoming a bore.

Yours sincerely, THE SAME.

THE ANSWER.

DEAR ME,
Yes.

Yours,
YOU.

Breakfast Table Politics.

Fond Wife (pathetically-anxious to be well informed and an intelligent companion to her husband). "I suppose that that surplice of LLOYD GEORGE's you were all discussing last night, and wondering what he would do with it, is the one that he will have no use for after the Welsh Church is disestablished."



RESULT OF A COURSE OF "YIP-I-ADIN," ETC.



AFTER AN OVERDOSE OF "THE HEART BOWED DOWN."

THE POWER OF MUSIC.

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

IN *The Ministry of Poll Poorman* (ARNOLD) Colonel PEDDER has succeeded in making at least four real and lovable people—to wit, the *Reverend Apollos Burnett* (Poll for short), the staunch crank whose eccentricity takes the form of aiming to become a poor man's parson by holding aloof from the gentry, himself working with his hands (for sake of the symbol) in fustian and corduroy—to the enormous scandal of the respectable part of his flock; *Sarah Blagge*, the strange, rugged, beautiful girl "off the land," whom he grows to love and takes to wife, to the indefinite increase of the scandal; *Poll's* worldly and worthy old clerical uncle, who is made alive with a few deft strokes of the pen and killed too casually in the second chapter; and *Helen Grattan*, *Poll's* friend (a charming pastel), who dies in the third. The book is no mean achievement for what, judged both from its virtues and its defects, reads like a first novel. The author doesn't quite succeed, I think, with the pleasant, wise little schoolmaster or with brutal *Squire Halleck*, on both of which characters he has expended some pains. The former, with his thoughtful and courageous philosophy, could hardly have been so much afraid of the latter; while some mitigation of the ineffable caddishness of the leading gentleman of the village is demanded in the interests of plausibility. Someone would have horsewhipped *Squire Halleck* into exile long before the book begins. Colonel PEDDER has emphatically something to say; he has thought and felt, and he has force to command a hearing. He wants to offer to "the Church" and "Society" some frank and wholesome truths. A candid critic has to confess that the book would have been a better novel if it had been a worse

pamphlet. The pill shows up through the gilding, but it is quite an admirable pill.

I want a word with Mr. UPTON SINCLAIR. Only the other day he was trying to persuade me to knock off food and live on cold water and the New Thought; and now, in *Love's Pilgrimage* (HEINEMANN), he invites me to pity his hero because he could not get enough to eat. How does he explain this? Here was this young man, with all the water he wanted to drink and any amount of fresh air to eat, and yet he grumbled. But then he was a genius, and genius is notoriously eccentric. I know he was a genius, because he keeps saying so all through the book; and also because only a genius could have made such an impossible, infernal, blithering ass of himself at every opportunity. (I must apologise for my way of expressing myself, but one falls into this powerful, elemental manner after reading Mr. SINCLAIR.) Since I read my first novel, I have made the acquaintance of many exasperating heroes, but Mr. SINCLAIR's *Thyrsis* has them beat, if I may borrow an expression from his own country, to a frazzle. The trouble with Mr. SINCLAIR is that, after the success of *The Jungle*, he has felt obliged to be terrible and earth-shaking over everything. But I decline to be equally worked up over the fact that American publishers (sordid brutes who wanted their business to show a profit) returned *Thyrsis'* novels of genius—samples of which are given at frequent intervals throughout the story. "A book like this," says Mr. HALL CAINE in his preface, "needs little praise." As that is what I have given it, these words from the Master are comforting.

Every now and then Mr. TOM GALLON's *Memory Corner* (JOHN LONG) finds its way into that corner of my

memory in which *Miss Matty* reigns supreme. The two little old sisters and the sweet-faced girl who lives with them in the little green-shuttered house in the little old street way up in Hampstead are very nearly of the real *Cranford* breed. And yet, much as I like them, they don't touch my heart with the incomparable magic of Mrs. GASKELL's art. And the boy with the wonderful tenor voice, a son of the old ladies' long-lost sister, does not quite fit into the picture; nor yet his out-at-elbows patron and singing-master, a wandering musician of the *Svengali* type, who plants himself and his pupil under the old ladies' roof until such time as he shall be able, by the help of their savings, to bring him out at a public concert. You can imagine the flutterings in the Hampstead dovecote when the boy took the musical world by storm, and first won the girl's heart and then did his best to break it by deserting her and "Memory Corner" for an older woman. All this and more is prettily told, but it is no longer *Cranford*. It would indeed be surprising if it were; and I don't suppose Mr. GALLON will bless me for making the comparison. But, after all, it was he that put it into my head, and I only wish I could write a story half as pleasant myself.

I have to own that I was a good deal disappointed over *The Joys of Jones* (GREENING). It began excellently. *Jones* himself was quite an engaging figure, a sort of *Kipps*-like person, chained to a London office; and his author, Mr. FRED GILLET, wrote so nicely about him that I felt sure we were all three going to be great friends and in for a thoroughly good time. Then the great chance came, both to *Jones* and Mr. GILLET, in the shape of a kindly illness that released the former from work, and turned him adrift, at the age of thirty-eight, for the first time in his life in real country. And all that they made of such a glorious situation was a rather dreary farce about rabbit-shooting and elderly spinsters and getting drunk on home-made wine. The woeful waste of it! I am even now not quite certain how far Mr. GILLET sent his tale wrong through lack of skill, and how far from deliberate intent. I have a suspicion that he would defend the banality of his rural characters, their coarse and rather brutal humour, and the general stupidity of them, as realism. If so, I retort that realism of this kind has no business in such a book. To create a living and human figure like the little clerk, *Jones*, and set him up to be bullied by uncouth rustics and subjected to all the discomforts of farce, is bad art and worse taste. Moreover, it is not even amusing. Mr. GILLET must do better than this next time; that he so obviously can, only aggravates his present offence.

If you happen to be an amateur metaphysician feebly groping after the secret of the universe, and not above splitting an infinitive whilst addressing its Creator, and a fascinating-looking long-haired man comes into your room one evening and tells you that, owing to the arrival of an

unexpected comet, the earth is about to go off with a bang, at the same time offering you a chance of being transferred to the planet Zan, close with the offer by all means, if you are an adventurous kind of fellow who likes a hair-raising and melodramatic existence amongst people and places with exceedingly rum names. Otherwise say no, and whistle for a policeman. What *Adrian Osgard* did in *Veeni the Master* (STANLEY PAUL) was to accept his chance of metempsychosis, together with a hundred thousand other Earth-men; but I doubt if they would have done it if they had known exactly what they were in for. *Adrian*, for instance, was, so far as I can make out, entirely unaware that he was *Assenaue of the Beginning*, and that, after a long period of fierce fighting with the *Zanians* and spiritual conflict with *Veeni*, to whom he had delivered his soul, he would eventually, through the assistance of *Alythes the Learned*, marry *Evena* (alias *Queen Valla*), whom he had once loved in the Garden of a Thousand Pleasures; and

live, I suppose, happily ever afterwards. This seems rather rough on *Veeni the Master*, who was cut out by his underling, for *Veeni* also had loved *Evena* in the Garden. But perhaps he will have better luck next time when the planet Zan in its turn gets fractured by a comet. Seriously, I am unable to make very much of Mr. R. F. LAMPORT's attempt to combine the methods of Messrs. H. G. WELLS and RIDER HAGGARD with a vague religious allegory. He calls *Veeni the Master* "The Story of a Dream." I must let it go out unsolved through the ivory gate.



The Compounder of Magical Essences. "I FEAR THERE WILL BE GRIEVOUS DISCONTENT AT THE CASTLE TO-NIGHT. IN THE PLACE OF THIS LOVE-POTION, WITH WHICH SHE WAS TO WIN HER LORD TO HER AGAIN, I HAVE INADVERTENTLY SENT THE LADY A BALSAM FOR BUNIONS."

"What respectable serious Englishman or American of high birth with oadematic education, gentlemanlike appearance and in favourable financial circumstances, who in choosing a partner for life attaches great value to spiritual and bodily excellency would be willing to become acquainted with one of my relations, regarding matrimony on mutual satisfaction?"

Masculine Modes.

"The instrument is built up upon 'the Charles Brindley system,' which in addition to providing special tonal effects, enables the player to rapidly change his combinations with a minimum of physical exertion and mental strain."

Our authority is a local paper, but we forbear to give its name; partly to spare its feelings, and partly because we are not quite sure which one it is.

To a Certain Road Hog.

His language was warm as he suddenly slowed

For the pony and trap which had dared to intrude;

And proved him, though vague in the rule of the road,

Word-perfect at least in the rôle of the rude.

"Royal Garrison Artillery.—Second-lieut. A. W. B. Buckland to be second-lieutenant."—*Western Morning News*. Promotion in the Royal Garrison Artillery may be slow, but it is very sure.